

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 and 33-34 are pending in the application. Claim 32 has been canceled. No new matter has been added. Support for the amendment can be found in the disclosure, particularly original claim 34 and Figures 35-38. Entry of the amendment after final is respectfully requested. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-29 have been allowed. Claims 30-31 and 33-34 remain rejected.

Summary of the Claim Amendments

Claims 30, 31, and 34 have been amended.

Claim 30

Independent claim 30 was made dependent on claim 1.

Claim 31

Independent claim 31 was amended to clarify that engagement between the tapered inner surface and the tapered outer surface occurs on the side of the door that is opposite from the handle lever side. The engaged tapered outer surface narrows in a direction away from the handle lever. A non tapered outer surface section of the handle shaft engages a non tapered inner surface section of the sleeve on the opposite side of the door to align the handle shaft relative to the door. None of the applied references teach or suggest having *both* tapered and non tapered engagement occurring on the opposite side of a door, especially with the other recited handle shaft features of removal prevention and alignment.

Claim 34

The amendment to claim 34 further highlights the handle shaft alignment feature. The cited references do not teach or suggest the recited feature.

Comments on the Substance of the Interview

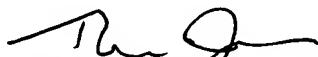
A telephonic interview was conducted on November 16, 2004 between Examiner Suzanne Barrett and a representative (Daniel Wasil, Reg. No. 45,303) of Applicants. Applicants had submitted a proposed amendment (regarding claims 30, 31, and 34) to the Examiner prior to the interview. The proposed amendment was acceptable to the Examiner. Thus, it was agreed that the claims as amended as above would place the application in condition for allowance. The courtesy of the Examiner is appreciated.

Conclusion

Allowance of all of Applicant's pending claims is respectfully requested.

The undersigned will be happy to discuss any aspect of the Application by telephone at the Office's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



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Reg. No. 31,029